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TAGS: PREL UNSC UN

SUBJECT: SYG SELECTION: MARCH 28 SECURITY COUNCIL INFORMAL  
CONSULTATIONS

REF: USUN 765

Classified By: Ambassador John R. Bolton, Permanent Representative, for  
reasons 1.4 b,d

¶1. (SBU) Summary. Following the practice established by Ambassador Bolton during the U.S. Presidency in February, Argentine PR Mayoral briefed the Council in informal consultations on the results of his bilateral meetings with members on the issue of the Secretary-General (SYG) selection. The discussion focused on remaining differences among Council members regarding the principle of rotation and whether the next SYG must come from Asia. Ambassador Bolton noted that the principle of geographic rotation, if it exists, should seem to indicate the next SYG should come from Eastern Europe, not Asia. The Council agreed that Mayoral should informally brief GA President Eliasson on the state of Council discussions and China, as Council President for April, indicated that it would follow a similar practice.  
End Summary.

¶2. (SBU) During informal Security Council consultations on March 28, Argentine Permanent Representative (PR) Mayoral asked members of the Secretariat staff to leave the room and briefed Council members on the results of his bilateral consultations, as UNSC President, on the selection process of the next Secretary General. Mayoral noted that there were two main issues raised by Council members. First, whether or not the Council should establish regional rotation as a selection criteria, with the next SYG to come from Asia. And, second, how to establish a more "transparent" process and increased dialogue with the wider General Assembly membership. Mayoral noted that the majority of Council members supported the "traditional mechanisms" for selection and did not want to make significant changes.

¶3. (SBU) He said that the "significant majority" of Council members support regional rotation in favor of Asia, though he noted that one country supported extending the principle of rotation to another regional group. "Most members" wanted to see the process conclude by the end of September or early October, with consultations to begin on specific candidates "in June or July." Mayoral noted that the presence of senior officials, including heads of state and foreign ministers, for the General Assembly session in September might prove an opportune moment to "take a high-level decision" on the candidates. Mayoral said that the "great majority" of Council members rejected the idea of providing more than one name to the General Assembly.

¶4. (SBU) On improving the "transparency" of the process, Mayoral said that Council members supported the idea of a regular dialogue between the Presidents of the Security Council and the General Assembly. It was also suggested that the Council might encourage candidates to present themselves, and their ideas for the organization, to the regional groups in order to increase the broader membership's awareness of

their campaigns. In the discussion following Mayoral's briefing, UK PR Jones Parry suggested that the Council consider a more formal notification of the process, in writing, to the GA President. French PR de La Sabliere and others supported a more informal approach and opposed the idea of a letter, at least for the time being. Mayoral agreed that he would speak to Eliasson before the end of the month. Chinese Political Coordinator Li noted that Chinese PR Wang would follow the precedent established by Ambassador Bolton and Mayoral during the Chinese Presidency in April.

¶5. (C) Much of the subsequent discussion among Council members focused on the issue of regional rotation. De La Sabliere repeated France's position that Asia has "priority but not exclusivity" and suggested that the Council might not be able to resolve the debate "on principle." Qatar and China repeated their strong support for an Asian candidate. Ambassador Bolton noted that the principle of regional rotation, if the Council agreed it existed, would seem to indicate that the next SYG should come from Eastern Europe, as the only UN regional group not to have had a Secretary-General in the sixty-year history of the

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organization. Russian PR Denisov, representing one of the two Eastern European members of the Council, noted that he was concerned by the doubts raised about the Council's traditions and practices. "If traditions exist, we must follow them," said Denisov. "If we depart from them, we will plunge into the unknown and make the decision difficult for everyone." The other Eastern European member, Slovakian PR Burian, said that the Council should seek the best candidate. "If the best candidate comes from another region, we should not disregard him only because he is not Asian."

¶6. (C) Comment: USUN Pol Couns subsequently was informed by his Slovakian counterpart that the Slovakian Foreign Minister

was an undeclared SYG candidate who was waiting to assess the outcome of June elections. The Slovaks were grateful for Ambassador Bolton's "inadvertent endorsement" of possible Eastern European candidates." End Comment.

BOLTON